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UFOs may be tricks, say experts studying them

By Barney Gallagher
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HAVERHILL — The strong possibility that Unidentified Flying Objects seen at night by Haverhill residents are the result of a trick being played on the whole city was raised yesterday by a nationally-prominent expert on unidentified flying objects.

More and more reports of sightings are being made as residents realize that others have seen what they did. Some who said they were afraid of being scoffed at have now decided to speak out.

There is general agreement that glowing objects are moving across the sky at night. Almost every person seeing them, on different nights, reports that the object periodically glows more brightly, then drops what appears to be a fiery piece of material.

Walter Andrus, of Seguin, Texas, international director of the Mutual UFO Network, said the sightings strongly resemble the tricks played by youths several years ago, tricks he has not heard of in recent years.

"You inflate a large plastic trash bag with hot air, suspend a candle under it, and it will rise like a hot air balloon. Every once in a while pieces catch fire and drop off. I'm not saying that's what this is, but it certainly resembles the old trick," he said.

Thousands of people at a band concert and fireworks show in Newburyport Saturday night saw several examples of glowing objects sent into the night sky on balloons, when children attached green lights to helium-filled balloons and floated them out over the city.

One Haverhill resident who has been getting many telephone calls since his picture and a drawing he made were published Sunday in the Eagle-Tribune is Brian McCarthy, 14, of Edgelawn Ave.

Persons from various parts of the city have called him.

Among others reporting sightings was Fred Stuart, 29, of 39 Arcadia Ave., who was taking his canoe out of Round Pond a week ago last Sunday night about 9:15, on the Concord Street side, when he saw the object across the top of the trees toward the Whittier School.

He reported the steady path, west to east, which was punctuated by the periodic glow, the dropping of burning material, and then the sudden disappearance, as reported in most other sightings.